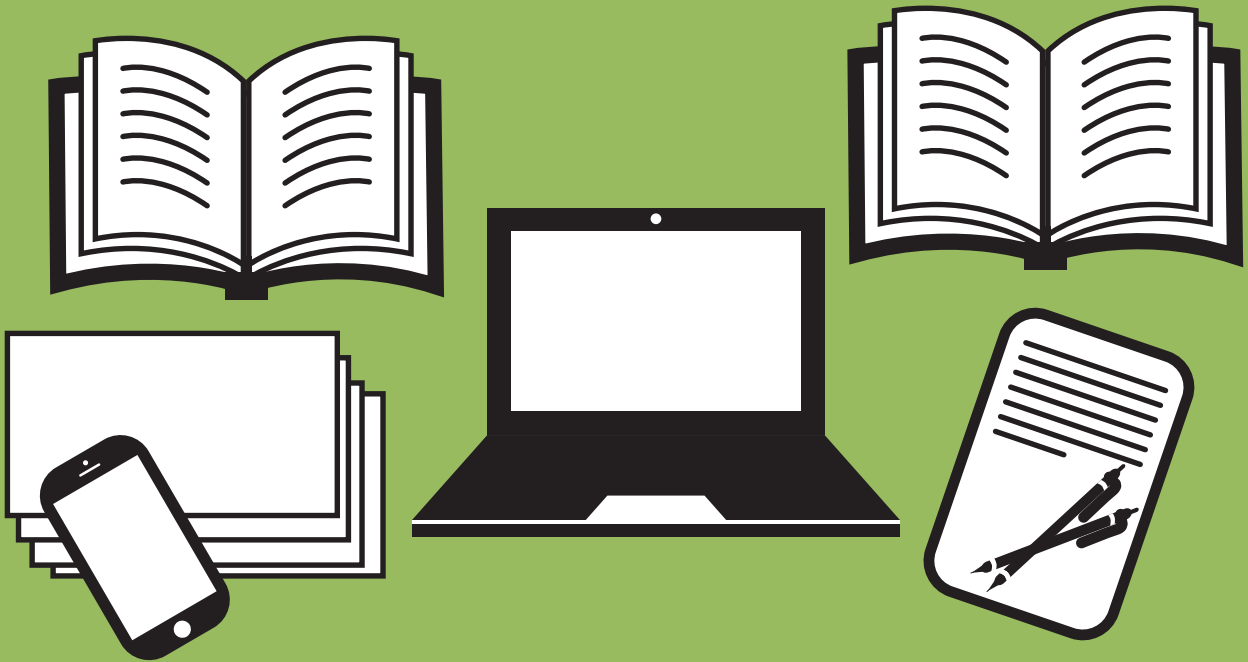


RESEARCH METHOD: 20. DESKTOP RESEARCH



20. DESKTOP RESEARCH

The world is bursting with knowledge, information and inspiration, and most of it is readily available in libraries and on the Internet. Doing desktop research is a way of accessing lots of knowledge very quickly to better understand a challenge at the start of a project.

Materials needed: A computer, a desk, maybe a qualified librarian! A shared poster wall or digital blog area that everyone in the group can access and see.

Time required: 30–45 minutes. Can also be done as homework.

How?

1) You might want to start by using The 'To Do' List (method no. 9) to realise what you need to research.

2) Brainstorm and decide what kinds of material you want to look for and where to find them. You must aim for diversity and quantity: articles in the news media, TV, research articles, reports and other earlier assignments, websites, blogs and books.

3) Find a way of sharing the material with members of the group.

What's next: Do some Clustering (method no. 25) to organise and analyse the material and acquire insights into where you need to dig deeper or where the interesting questions or challenges lie.

RESEARCH METHOD: 21. THE ANTROPOLOGIST



21. THE ANTHROPOLOGIST

This method involves going out into the world to experience and observe. It is inspired by how anthropologists study behaviour and culture in a non-judgemental and holistic manner noting all the different details of how other people live. This is a great inspiration and an important tool when creating solutions to problems or learning about a specific challenge.

Materials needed: A notebook and a pen and/ or a smart phone with camera and a recorder or recording and photo equipment.

Time required: 45 minutes to half a day. Can be done as homework.

How?

1) Select and visit places relevant to the challenge you are dealing with (be sure to ask permission).

2) Use your senses to register as many details as possible and note: What does the place look like? How are people behaving and greeting you? Hang out and do some of the activities that the “locals” are doing.

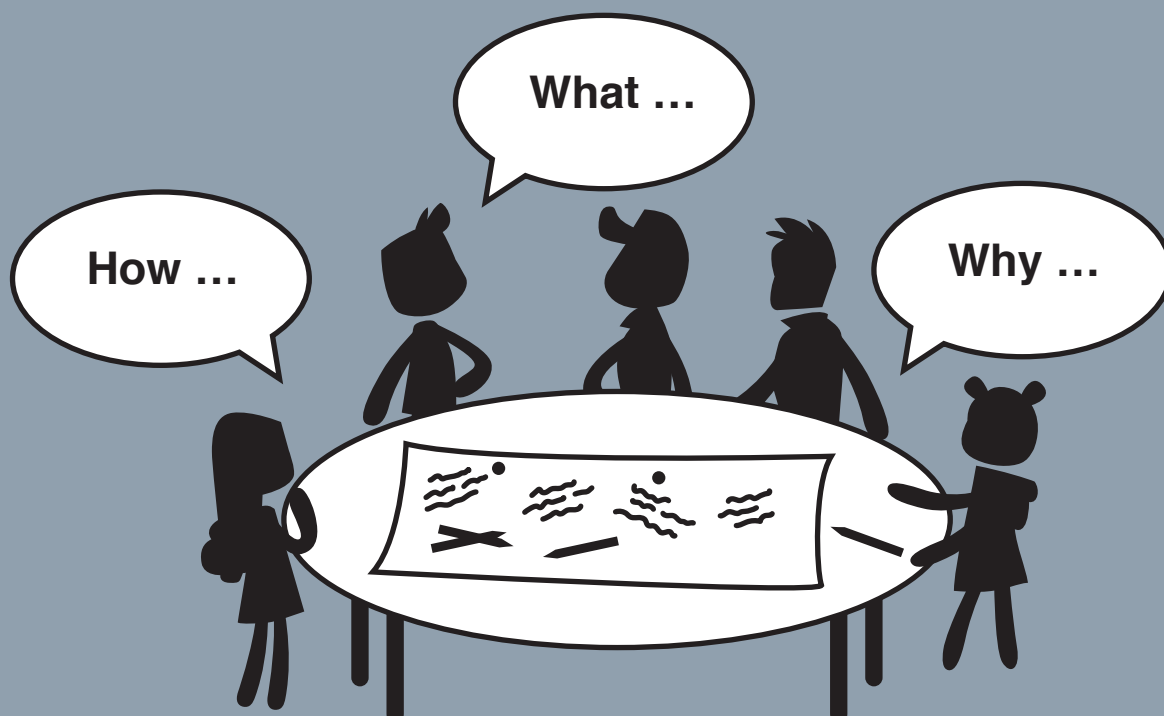
3) Note your impressions and thoughts on a note pad, draw sketches of the surroundings and the people and objects or record impressions and thoughts on a cell phone.

4) Keep an open and non-judgemental mind while doing this activity!

5) Sort and analyse the information: what are the insights?

What's next: You could use Personas (method no. 29) to make insights more present and tangible.

PROCESS METHOD – *FRAMING*: 08. FACT AND INSPIRATION FINDING



08. FACT AND INSPIRATION FINDING

Before doing research about a challenge this method is a way of discussing and identifying what kinds of information and inspiration might be needed to develop a solution to a challenge, deal with a project or study a specific challenge.

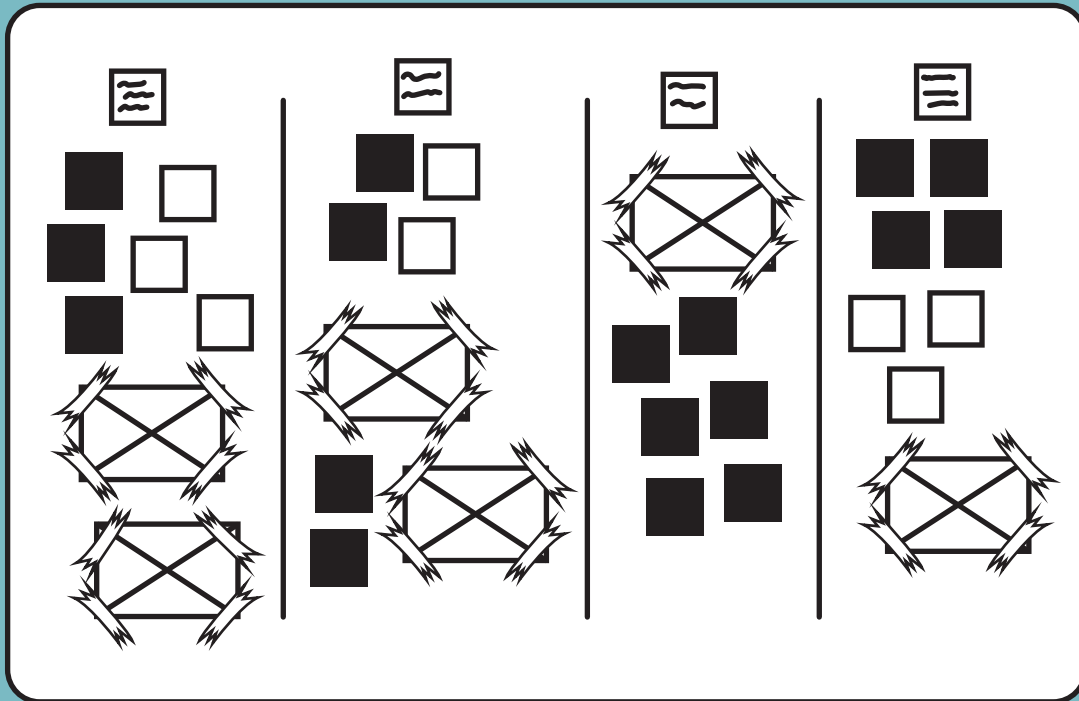
Materials needed: Blackboard, cardboard, smartboard or sharable online board e.g. padlet.

Time required: 45 minutes–1.5 hours.

How?

- 1) Choose a person to lead the session and make notes on a shared piece of paper
- 2) Discuss and answer the following questions:
 - What do you know about the challenge or the present situation?
 - What would you like to know more about?
 - How might you be inspired and by what?
- 3) Note the most interesting answers and discuss how you might gather information about them: observation, interviews, engaging people in sketching together, etc. (see other research and ideation methods).
- 4) Evaluate and try to choose what to do considering the available time, how many you are, where you could go and who you could talk to.

ANALYSIS METHOD: 25. CLUSTERING



25. CLUSTERING

This method is a way of discovering what categories emerge from the research collected. You sort and place the collected information and research on a shared board, using closeness or distance to map out and clarify relationships and differences between research data in a visual and tangible way. This makes it easier to understand a subject and create new knowledge or develop ideas in project work.

Materials needed: Either a large sheet of paper or cardboard, printed photos and paper or a digital online shared board e.g. padlet, where you can upload and move photos and notes around.

Time required: 30–45 minutes.

How?

1) Find a space on a wall or on a desk and put up the information gathered in the form of notes on post-it notes, small photos or drawings, pieces of text, etc.

2) You can do Clustering in different ways:

- Cluster the bits of information by placing information/pictures close to similar material and then find titles or headers that emerge for the different clusters and find relationships between them.
- Choose some predefined categories like: “location, time and size”, or “facts, opinions, ideas and challenges” or: hierarchies like “often, seldom, low and high” and categorise the information accordingly.

What's next: You could use the Analytical Diagrams (method no. 30).

ANALYSIS METHOD: 26. VISUALISING DATA



26. VISUALISING DATA

A diagram, pie chart or other graphic elements that depict relationships or the relative size or percentage of something is often easier to grasp in one glance and communicate than a lot of data and statistics explained in a long and complicated text. Data visualisation can create new insights because the relationship and the categories and hierarchies are immediately visible. Graphics are also an excellent communication tool.

Materials needed: Paper to sketch ideas and computer software to create illustrations and diagrams.

Time required: It depends on the number of and complexity of the data visualisation.

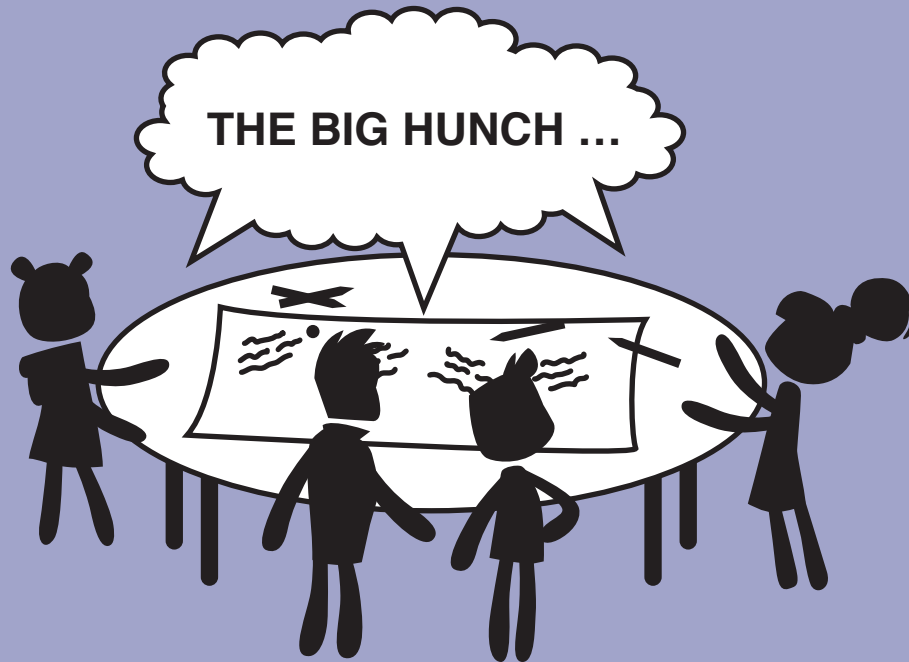
How?

1) Start by studying the data and the information collected. Which data is the most interesting and relevant?

2) Generate ideas for how to visualise the data. Here you can use traditional diagrams like pie charts or bar charts or columns. You could also get inspiration by looking on the Internet and seeing how data visualisation experts are doing it. Think of new ways of illustrating percentage, size and relationships, etc. by using for example objects and photos that would be relevant to the challenge. Use colours!!

3) Look at what you are doing with a critical eye: is it easy to understand, helpful and simple? Is it a truthful representation of the data and the information? If not, then continue developing the visualisation.

IDEATION METHOD: 31. WHAT IF?



31. WHAT IF?

Often, when embarking on a development project or study area, we may have some immediate ideas that might be interesting or revealing. This method allows an initial brainstorm where everybody can express their immediate "Gut Feeling", "Hunch" or "Intuition." Let's not forget that even scientists start their work by forming a hypothesis!

Materials needed: Blackboard, cardboard, smartboard or sharable online board e.g. padlet

Time required: 45 minutes.

How?

1) Gather the team at the start of a class or project and create an open-minded, relaxed atmosphere where everybody's thoughts and ideas are encouraged. It might be a good idea to relocate to a cosier place than the classroom or eat fruit or cake while doing this exercise!

Sit in a circle or on the floor. Be sure to have a shared whiteboard, blackboard or screen to write on for everyone to see.

2) Ask questions like: What do you think of this challenge? What do you expect to learn? What would you like to do with it? Where do you think the interesting challenges are? What kind of project or product do you think we need to develop? Where do you think the important potential is for learning?

3) Appoint a facilitator or take turns with older pupils who take notes and illustrate the suggestions and "hunches." Encourage everyone to express what is in their hearts and minds.

4) Read aloud from the list at the end of the session and see if anything really interesting has come up. Try to transform that into a hypothesis you can research afterwards. If you cannot, be sure to save the ideas for later in some form.

IDEATION METHOD: 36. BRAINSTORM



36. BRAINSTORM

This is a classic ideation method that can help you develop multiple ideas with other people quickly. The important thing here is to avoid criticism and keep an open mind towards all ideas and suggestions. It is important to have a responsible person as a facilitator to keep the energy and motivation high and to respect the time limit. A fun twist to the exercise is to do an "inverse brainstorm" where ideas for creating really bad solutions or to enhance problems are ideated. This creates lots of fun and laughter and often reveals relevant aspects of an issue. It is also a good warming up exercise!

Materials needed: Pens and paper post-it notes or a shared online digital board e.g. padlet.

Time required: 30 minutes.

How?

1) Appoint a person responsible for keeping time and for collecting/posting all the ideas on a blackboard or piece of paper.

2) Write the challenge down in a place for everyone to see.

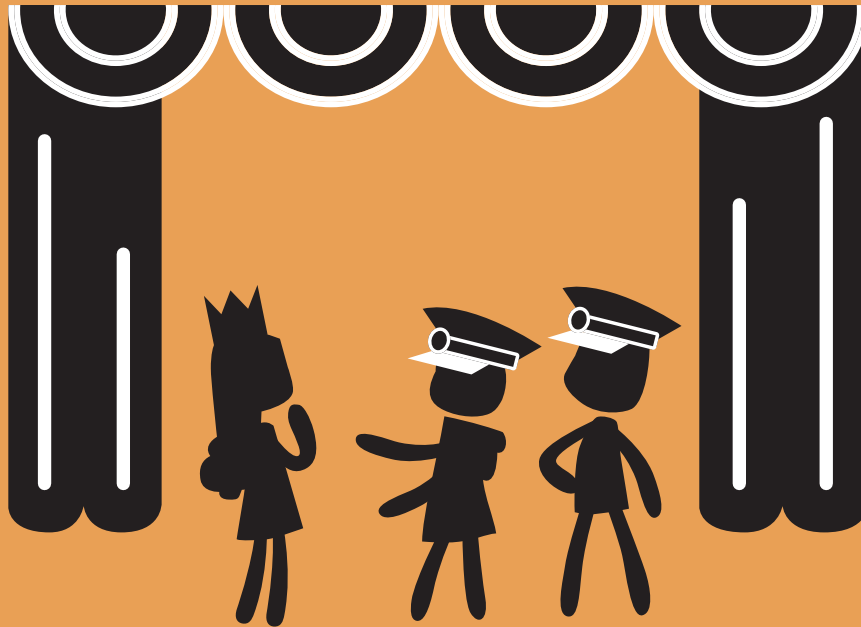
3) Respect these rules and explain them to all participants: everybody must speak up, keep ideas coming, the more unusual the better, the more the better. Be playful and encourage one another, and do not criticise each other's ideas. Build on the ideas and listen to one another.

4) Decide on a time frame, 30 minutes max. Then start!

5) Everybody states their ideas, and the facilitator writes them on a shared piece of paper or puts them on post-it notes or on an online digital board for all to see.

6) If the rules are not respected, take a break and get back on track.

CREATION METHOD: 42. ROLE PLAY



42. ROLE PLAY

Role play has always been a way of experiencing what it would be like to be a horse, a prince or a wizard. This method uses role play and acting to try to experience something and develop ideas and solutions in relation to a challenge or a project.

Materials needed: Paper, pens, costumes, settings, props (or not!).

Time required: 1 hour to 1 day.

How?

1) Start by discussing the following: what do you want to learn and develop through acting it out? What kind of situation or scene would be interesting to act out? What do you need to do it and get in the mood? Do you need props and costumes? Do you want to create a storyboard to act from or will it be improv theatre where the different characters are clearly defined but you will develop the dialogue and actions on the fly?

2) As role play and acting is something many people find a bit difficult it is important to have fun while still being serious enough to actually act and commit properly to the exercise!

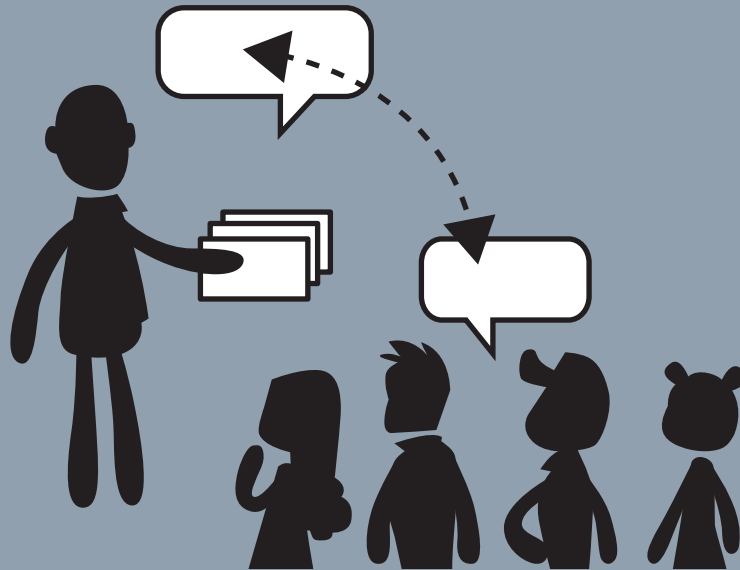
3) Follow the story board or the characters you have chosen as faithfully as possible and be respectful towards one another. Make the others relax and try to follow their ideas and experiments if you are improvising.

4) Act out different scenes, situations and roles.

5) Step back and evaluate what happened. What possibilities and situations arose from the role play or acting that seemed interesting? Did you become aware of new things you had not thought of before? Explain!

PROCESS METHOD – *COMMUNICATION*:

17. PITCHING



17. PITCHING

To pitch originally means to throw something, but it is often used in the meaning: a speech or an act that attempts to persuade someone to buy or do something. Pitching is a method of presenting your idea, project or research insights in a short, dynamic and interesting way.

Materials needed: You need to know where you are pitching and for whom!

Time required: A half day to prepare and five minutes to present!

How?

1) Know who you are presenting for; discuss what you think they will be looking for or are interested in. Where are you going to present and how much time will you have to do it?

2) Discuss, brainstorm ideas for your presentation. What will make the main points clear and the form of the presentation interesting? Think of how you can engage the audience by using music, storytelling, enactment, props etc. that will make the presentation lively and interesting.

3) What communication techniques do you think will match the audience? Discuss and select.

4) Plan the pitch very carefully; think about any props you will need; what do you plan to do and say and what are the roles of the individual team members? Be visual and communicative in your design of the presentation.

5) Make a script of the pitch and rehearse it carefully several times ahead of time.